IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please AMEND claims in accordance with the following:

1.   (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A search method comprising:

specifying a search word included in a search condition designated by a user;

extracting a synonym of said search word from a synonym file;

obtaining evaluation data of said search word, which is at least either of a score based on an appearance frequency of said search word and a number of documents including said search word and evaluation data of the extracted synonym, which is at least either of a score based on an appearance frequency of said extracted synonym and a number of documents including said extracted synonym;

presenting said user with said search word, said extracted synonym, said evaluation data of said search word, and said evaluation data of said extracted synonym in a manner in which said search word and synonym are selectable;

accepting data representing a search word selected by said user or data representing a synonym selected by said user; and

presenting said user with data concerning an identified document including the selected search word or the selected synonym.

2.   (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The search method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said specifying comprises extracting said search word from a sentence input as said search condition by a morphological analysis.

3.   (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The search method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said obtaining evaluation data comprises

counting either said number of documents including said search word and said number of documents including said extracted synonym or a first appearance frequency of said search word in said documents including said search word and a first appearance frequency of said extracted synonym in said documents including said extracted synonym by searching documents

by using said search word and said extracted synonym.

4. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The search method as set forth in claim 3, wherein said obtaining evaluation data further comprises:

counting a second appearance frequency of said search word in a sentence input as said search condition; and

calculating said score based on said appearance frequency of said search word by using said second appearance frequency of said search word and said first appearance frequency of said search word, and said score based on said appearance frequency of said extracted synonym by using said second appearance frequency of said search word and said first appearance frequency of said extracted synonym.

5. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The search method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said first presenting comprises:

judging whether or not said evaluation data of said search word and said evaluation data of said extracted synonym satisfies a predetermined condition; and

presenting said user with said search word or said extracted synonym whose evaluation data satisfies said predetermined condition in a state indicating being pre-selected and said search word or said extracted synonym whose evaluation data does not satisfy said predetermined condition in a state indicating being unselected.

6. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The search method as set forth in claim5, wherein said predetermined condition is a condition in which said number of documents including said search word or said number of documents including said extracted synonym is lower than a first threshold, or a condition in which said score based on said appearance frequency of said search word or said score based on said appearance frequency of said extracted synonym exceeds a second threshold.

7. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The search method as set forth in claim 1, wherein said second presenting comprises:

counting, for each of said documents, a third appearance frequency of said selected search word in said identified document, or a third appearance frequency of said selected synonym in said identified document; and

presenting said user with said data concerning said documents in order of values

3

calculated by using said third appearance frequency of said selected search word or said third appearance frequency of said selected synonym.

8.   (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A search program embodied on a computer-readable storage medium causing a computer to perform operations, said operations comprising:

specifying a search word included in a search condition designated by a user;

extracting a synonym of said search word from a synonym file;

obtaining evaluation data of said search word, which is at least either of a score based on an appearance frequency of said search word and a number of documents including said search word, and evaluation data of the extracted synonym, which is at least either of a score based on an appearance frequency of said extracted synonym and a number of documents including said extracted synonym;

presenting said user with said search word, said extracted synonym, said evaluation data of said search word, and said evaluation data of said extracted synonym in a manner in which said search word and said extracted synonym are selectable;

accepting data representing a search word selected by said user or data representing a synonym selected by said user; and

presenting said user with data concerning an identified document including the selected search word or the selected synonym.

9.   (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The search program as set forth in claim 8, wherein said specifying comprises extracting said search word from a sentence input as said search condition by a morphological analysis.

10.   (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The search program as set forth in claim 8, wherein said obtaining evaluation data comprises

counting either said number of documents including said search word and said number of documents including said extracted synonym or a first appearance frequency of said search word in said documents including said search word and a first appearance frequency of said extracted synonym in said documents including said extracted synonym by searching documents by using said search word and said extracted synonym.

11.   (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The search program as set forth in claim 10, wherein said obtaining evaluation data further comprises:

4

counting a second appearance frequency of said search word in a sentence input as said search condition; and

calculating said score based on said appearance frequency of said search word by using said second appearance frequency of said search word and said first appearance frequency of said search word, and said score based on said appearance frequency of said extracted synonym by using said second appearance frequency of said search word and said first appearance frequency of said extracted synonym.

12.   (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The search program as set forth in claim 8, wherein said first presenting comprises:

judging whether or not said evaluation data of said search word and said evaluation data of said extracted synonym satisfies a predetermined condition; and

presenting said user with said search word or said extracted synonym whose evaluation data satisfies said predetermined condition in a state indicating being pre-selected and said search word or said extracted synonym whose evaluation data does not satisfy said predetermined condition in a state indicating being unselected.

13.   (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The search program as set forth in claim 12, wherein said predetermined condition is a condition in which said number of documents including said search word or said number of documents including said extracted synonym is lower than a first threshold, or a condition in which said score based on said appearance frequency of said search word or said score based on said appearance frequency of said extracted synonym exceeds a second threshold.

14.   (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The search program as set forth in claim 8, wherein said second presenting comprises:

counting, for each of said documents, a third appearance frequency of said selected search word in said identified documents, or a third appearance frequency of said selected synonym in said identified document; and

presenting said user with said data concerning said documents in order of values calculated by using said third appearance frequency of said selected search word or said third appearance frequency of said selected synonym.

5

15.   (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) A search apparatus, comprising:

a specifier that specifies a search word included in a search condition designated by a user;

an extractor that extracts a synonym of said search word from a synonym file;

an obtainer that obtains evaluation data of said search word, which is at least either of a score based on an appearance frequency of said search word and a number of documents including said search word, and evaluation data of the extracted synonym, which is at least either of a score based on an appearance frequency of said extracted synonym and a number of documents including said extracted synonym;

a first indicator that presents said user with said search word, said extracted synonym, said evaluation data of said search word, and said evaluation data of said extracted synonym in a manner in which said search word and said extracted synonym are selectable;

a processor that accepts data representing a search word selected by said user or data representing a synonym selected by said user; and

a second indicator that presents said user with data concerning an identified document including the selected search word or the selected synonym.

16.   (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The search apparatus as set forth in claim 15, wherein said specifier comprises an extractor that extracts said search word from a sentence input as said search condition by a morphological analysis.

17.   (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The search apparatus as set forth in claim 15, wherein said obtainer comprises

a counter that counts either said number of documents including said search word and said number of documents including said extracted synonym or a first appearance frequency of said search word and in said documents including said search word and a first appearance frequency of said extracted synonym in said documents including said extracted synonym by searching documents by using said search word and said extracted synonym.

18.   (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The search apparatus set forth in claim 17, wherein said obtainer further comprises:

a second counter that counts a second appearance frequency of said search word in a sentence input as said search condition; and

a calculator that calculates said score based on said appearance frequency of said

search word by using said second appearance frequency of said search word and said first appearance frequency of said search word, and said score based on said appearance frequency of said extracted synonym by using said second appearance frequency of said search word and said search word and said first appearance frequency of said extracted synonym.

19. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The search apparatus as set forth in claim 15, wherein said first indicator comprises:

a processor that judges whether or not said evaluation data of said search word and said evaluation data of said extracted synonym satisfies a predetermined condition; and

an indicator that presents said user with said search word or said extracted synonym whose evaluation data satisfies said predetermined condition in a state indicating being pre-selected and said search word or said extracted synonym whose evaluation data does not satisfy said predetermined condition in a state indicating being unselected.

20. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The search apparatus as set forth in claim 19, wherein said predetermined condition is a condition in which said number of documents including said search word or said number of documents including said extracted synonym is lower than a first threshold, or a condition in which said score based on said appearance frequency of said search word or said score based on said appearance frequency of said extracted synonym exceeds a second threshold.

21. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The search apparatus as set forth in claim 15, wherein said second indicator comprises:

a counter that counts, for each of said documents, a third appearance frequency of said selected search word in said identified document, or a third appearance frequency of said selected synonym; and

an indicator that presents said user with said data concerning said documents in order of values calculated by using said third appearance frequency of said selected search word or said third appearance frequency of said selected synonym.